

# Bringing Your Prayer Life Into Focus

## A Short Devotional Guide

2002 Christina L Wood

## Bringing Your Prayer Life Into Focus

I struggle with prayer. It is not something that comes easily to me. I wish it did. But God is faithful. He has not let me be content with seeing prayer through blurry lenses. He wants to correct the faulty views I have of prayer and replace them with a clearer perspective of Him and His desire for me in prayer.

This fifteen-day devotional is a result of several trips to the Ultimate Ophthalmologist- God. It is a record of some of the vision problems He has identified in me, and the lenses He has used to help in correcting them. I pray that if you also struggle with prayer that these particular lenses will help you too.

The daily devotions are set up in four sections.

Connections to Make

Verses to Consider

Quotes to Ponder

Questions to Ask

Take time especially over the Verses and the Questions. Allow the Spirit to direct you. I pray that you will be blessed by the time you invest.

I have also provided several helps at the end of the devotional. I believe you will find them useful.

CLW

*“Before it is anything else, lack of prayer is a lack of hunger for God.” – Ben Patterson*

## Day One: Finding Our Faulty Focus

### Connections to Make:

It is so tempting to turn to one more book, one more sermon, or one more formula to gain a richer, more meaningful prayer life. After all, who doesn't want to utter a three-line prayer every morning and watch blessings fall into their lap? Who doesn't want to read the latest wisdom by a respected author and suddenly find themselves voluntarily on their knees for hours? And surely it would be wonderful if the preachers' passion from the pulpit would suddenly leap into our own souls and ignite a burning desire for prayer?

But the reality is that it is *God* who turns us into something remarkable – a person of prayer. Only God can give us a desire for prayer. Not ourselves, not the pastor, not the author. Just God. It is His good pleasure to draw us to His heart in prayer. Our part is simply to be available and willing.

Does this mean that studies like this and sermons on Sunday have no value in our journey in prayer? No, instead we must see them for what they are: tools in the Master's Hand as He draws us to Himself. They are not magic potions, tricks or invocations. Rather their value is in us allowing God to work in and through them to achieve His perfect purpose for us in prayer.

Over the next several days I invite you to take a good look at your prayer life. We will use various lenses to help us clearly see what our prayer life is like and what it could be like. I pray you enjoy the journey.

### Verses to Consider:

I Samuel 12:23; I Peter 5:7; Deuteronomy 4:7;  
Psalm 141:2

### Quotes to Ponder:

“The plethora of books on prayer suggests to me not only that we buy books because we find prayer difficult but also that the books are ultimately unsatisfying: better technique doesn't necessarily make for better prayer.” – Susan Wise Brown

### Questions to Ask:

Have you ever felt that your prayer life was in a rut?

What are some of the ways we can fall into the trap of a mundane prayer life?

How can we combat this trap?

Spend some time thinking about your prayer life. Evaluate what you like most about it; what you like least about it. Ask the Spirit to reveal to you both areas of encouragement and areas that need change.

## **Day Two: Fixing Our Focus**

### **Connections to Make:**

Recently after suffering much abuse (in the form of over use) my printer just up and died on me, without even the courtesy of waiting for a good time to do it. Of course, that led to a search for the perfect replacement. I might as well confess right now that I thought the search would take all of ten minutes (counting the time standing in line to buy it) and I would happily be on my way home to finish my printing job. Sadly, I was mistaken. What didn't take long, however, was realizing that there wasn't such a thing as the perfect replacement just waiting to be taken home. Instead there were 30 potential replacements and I didn't know which one to buy. Fortunately, just as great distress over my choices was about to prevail, a professional stepped in and helped me refocus. All I had to do was fix in my mind what was important for me to have in the printer and go from there. I had to center on one thing- what did I need it to do.

My life can be like that. I find that I often get overwhelmed with the choices I have before me and just need to re-center on one thing- God. Prayer helps me to do that. When I pray, I focus on God, who He is and what He wants for my life, and all those other things seem to fall into their proper place. God is my professional, just waiting to help me correctly evaluate what I need. All I have to do is take the time to go to Him in prayer and allow Him to do His job. After all, He does it so well.

### **Verses to Consider:**

Psalms 42: 1-2; Isaiah 26:3

### **Quotes to Ponder:**

“Prayer is a focus upon God whereby all things come into focus. By centering attention upon God, the Center, all things become centered.” – Eugene Peterson

“Before it is anything else, lack of prayer is a lack of hunger for God.” – Ben Patterson

### **Questions to Ask:**

Do you agree or disagree that a lack of prayer is a lack of hunger for God?

When you are hungry, how do you satisfy your appetite?

If we are hungry for God, how will we satisfy that hunger?

What would happen if we never felt hungry and as a result we never ate?

Is the same true in our spiritual lives?

What do you want God to do over the next few days/weeks in your prayer life?

## **Day Three: Microscope**

### *Finding the Hidden Agenda*

## **Our Motives in Prayer**

#### **Connections to Make:**

I hate to admit it, because it doesn't sound very spiritual, but I want credit for what I do well. (The not-so-good stuff someone else can take credit for.) I want people to notice when I line the chairs up for the service in an extra neat row. I like it when people pat me on the back for singing on key when I sit next to them in Service. And it's important to me for others to notice that I baked 10 dozen cookies when others only baked three. But most of all, I want people to pay attention when I am being especially spiritual- you know, when I quote the right Bible verse or offer to close the class in prayer. Sounds real spiritual doesn't it?

Good thing God knows this about me and loves me anyway. In fact, He loves me enough to offer me a better way, a better example. Time and time again Scripture records that Jesus went off alone to pray. Being without sin, Jesus didn't struggle with wanting the praise of men. It wouldn't have mattered to His motivation in prayer even if He always prayed in front of others, but He knew it would matter to ours. Like our Lord, we need to be willing to be "spiritual" in secret not just in public. Being seen shouldn't be our primary motivation in prayer. Our private prayer time demonstrates that who we are in God and our righteousness doesn't depend on the kudos of others- it depends on our time alone with Him.

Just as a microscope shows us things we could never see with the naked eye – so the Holy Spirit can show us things in our prayer lives that we could never see without the extra help. Submit yourself to the discerning lenses of the Holy Spirit's microscope and let Him reveal to you the "germs" (wrong motivations) that might be causing your prayer life to suffer.

#### **Verses to Look Up:**

Matthew 6:5-8; Mark 12:38-40; Psalm 17:1; Proverbs 28:9

#### **Quotes to Ponder:**

"Why does Jesus model solitary prayer? This practice checks our motivation." - Brian Dodd (Praying Jesus' Way)

"Don't spend a lot of time describing your mountain to the Lord. He knows what it is. Instead, focus your attention on the mountain mover – His glory, power, and faithfulness." – Bill Hybels (Too Busy Not To Pray)

"Prayer is not a method of using God; rather is prayer a means of reporting for duty to God." – Charles Allen

#### **Questions to Ask:**

What motivates you to pray? Love for others? Love for spending time with God? The need for an answer? The desire to be "spiritual"?

Why does it matter what our motives are in prayer?

What are some proper motives in prayer?

Today ask the Spirit to reveal your proper and improper motivations in prayer. Spend sometime paying attention to what you spend most of your time in when you pray- requests, praise, thanksgiving, confession. Ask your self if you need to pray in a certain way at a certain time to feel that you have properly prayed? Do you spend more time sharing prayer requests than actually praying? The answers to these questions may indicate what some of your motivations in prayer are.

**Day Four: Telescope**  
*Having a Heavenly Perspective*  
**God's Desire for us in Prayer**

**Connections to Make:**

I love instant pudding, microwave meals, boxed mixes, and fast food. I love quick and easy, fast fixes because they don't require a lot of time. And they don't require a lot of persistence or perseverance. Like most people I know, I want whatever I want and I want it NOW.

How true this is in my prayer life too. I want whatever I want and I want it now. I want to pray once (maybe twice) and then I want to see the results. Instant answers to instant prayer. But God loves me too much to let me always have what I want when I want it. He wants me to have something even better than anything I am probably asking for...Him and His perfect timing. We must learn the joy of waiting on Him in prayer. And sometimes the answer that comes in the waiting is "My Grace is Sufficient."

God sees things from a different perspective than we may see them. Perhaps it's time for us to pull out a heavenly telescope of sorts and see what His priorities are in prayer. Sometimes that priority is to wait. And we can wait with confidence when we understand Him to be the Sovereign God that He is.

**Verses to Consider:**

Isaiah 55:1-3; Lamentations 3:25, 26; Isaiah 40:18;  
Isaiah 64:4; Job 33:14

**Quotes to Ponder:**

"Perhaps one reason God delays His answers to our prayers is because He knows we need to be with Him far more than we need the things we ask of Him." – Ben Patterson (Deepening Your Conversation With God)

"Prayer is not a means by which I control God, it is a means of putting myself in a position where God can control me." Charles L. Allen

"In prayer, real prayer, we begin to think God's thoughts after Him: to desire the things He desires, to love the things He loves, to will the things He wills." Richard Foster (Celebration of Discipline)

**Questions to Answer:**

What is God's perspective on our prayer time?

What does He want to be our attitude in prayer?

How can we have His perspective in prayer?

Does the importance of our spending time with God, make our request unimportant or mean that God is not interested in answering that request?

NO. It means that we first seek Him and His perfect timing.

## **Day Five: Bifocals**

*Sometimes You Need a Little More Help*

### **God's Role in Our Prayers**

#### **Connections to Make:**

On a trip, things usually go well until I am asked to look at the map. Up until that point, the conversation is general, even generous, but the minute I have to pull out the map things go downhill. That's because I don't have a good sense of direction and I have work hard to even figure out where we are on a map let alone how to get to where we are going from it. Map reading is just not a skill I have.

But as much as I hate it, I am forced to admit that getting the map out is a good thing. Without it, our chances of survival are pretty slim – have you seen a couple in the car arguing over directions? Hands gesturing, faces distorted and steam rising? A disaster waiting to happen. So, out comes the map, a way out is established and eventually we end up at our desired destination.

In prayer, I want God to direct me. I spend lots of time generally asking for direction but I am not always willing to put in the specific map work- time in God's Word- to get it. God has provided the best mapping system in the universe, a cosmic GPS, if you will. His Word reveals where we are and where we should be going. It details the fastest route and the most scenic (both the recommended scenic route filled with good things and the to-be-avoided scenic route as it leads through the treacherous territory of sin). Without a doubt, it is certainly beneficial for us to brush up on our map skills as we journey in prayer.

If you have separated your prayer time and your Bible reading time, pull out the old bifocals and take some time to re-join the two. For those with vision problems, and we all have them, we need the extra help that prayer and the Word together can provide.

#### **Verses to Consider:**

Romans 8:26,27; John 17:20-26; Matthew 18:19,20; John 14:12-14; John 15:5

#### **Quotes to Ponder:**

“God always meets us where we are and slowly moves us along into deeper things.” – Richard Foster (Celebration of Discipline)

“When our prayers are offered in Jesus' name, in full harmony with His purposes and with the intent of glorifying God, we can be sure that our prayers will be answered.” – Larry Richards (Every Prayer and Petition in the Bible)

“The practice of prayer was never intended to be separated from practice of searching Scriptures.” Tom Elliff (A Passion for Prayer)

#### **Questions to Ask:**

The cooperation of the Spirit and Scripture are vital to a healthy prayer life. Why?

What role does God's Word play in our prayer lives?

What is the benefit of praying with God's Word in mind?

When you are looking for an answer to prayer, do you just pray and leave it or do you search out God's Word for your situation?

The Psalms are an excellent place to being incorporating Scripture into your prayer time. What are some verses from the Psalms you can incorporate into your prayer life? You may want to commit to praying a Psalm a day.

**Day Six: Video Camera**  
*Please Be Kind and Rewind*  
**Learning Moments in Prayer**

**Connections to Make:**

At about the age of thirteen, my parents decided I should take piano lessons. It sounded great to me- until the reality of practice set in. Suddenly, piano lessons didn't seem like such a great idea. What did seem like a great idea though were the voice lessons I took at the same time. Even though I had to practice the scales vocally, I didn't mind nearly so much. The difference was in the ease of what I had to do. Singing was easier for me than playing the piano. It was much harder to get my two hands to cooperate than it was to hit a high C. So, before long, the piano lessons stopped.

Now, of course, I regret that I didn't stick with it and try harder. I regret that I took the easy way out. But I regret it even more when I take the easy way out in prayer. In prayer, just like in learning the piano, there seem to be many lessons to learn. I don't get to be a great prayer warrior overnight. I must learn my lessons one by one.

Learning to love pray can be one of the hard lessons to learn. But loving prayer takes some of the hard work out of it. When we learn to love to pray, we become like the concert pianist who doesn't see playing the piano as meaningless work but rather a labor of love.

Imagine having a video camera recording your prayer times and being able to play them. What would you find? What could you learn about your prayer life? What areas would you see that could use some improvement?

**Verses to Consider:**

Psalms 51:6; Psalm 86:11,12; Luke 11:1; Luke 18:1-14;  
I Corinthians 14:15

**Quotes to Ponder:**

“Prayer is always the first thing to go when we get caught up in the world’s pace. And only prayer can deliver us from that pace.” – Ben Patterson

“You can choose the discomfort of the discipline of praying when you don’t feel like it, or the desolation and terminal fatigue of life without prayer.” – Ben Patterson  
“Prayer is not overcoming God’s reluctance, it is laying hold of His highest willingness.” – Archbishop Trench

**Questions to Ask:**

Can we ever get to the point of being perfect pray-ers?

What are some lessons we can learn about prayer?

Why is it important to keep growing in our prayer life?

How can we learn more about prayer?

Do you want to learn to have a love for prayer?

**Day Seven: Magnifying Glass**  
*One Size Fit All*  
**The Power of Confession**

**Connections to Make:**

I confess I need to confess. I think I am perfect. I mean confession is really for the other guy right? Isn't that why God put it in the Bible- so the other guy would have to confess to not being as perfect as me?

Ok. Ok. I don't really think I am perfect but I do sometimes think that confession really is for the other guy. Oh, I may not say that out loud but it's what I think when I fail to confess my own sins before God. God's Word makes it clear that we all have reason to confess. We all have reason to lay it all out in its gory detail. God knows this about us anyway. He knows that we are imperfect people in need of a savior. He also knows that unless we realize it about ourselves, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. And He knows that unless we come clean before Him, our prayers will be hindered. Which makes sense when you know that a Holy God cannot tolerate sin. Yet, when we fail to make confession a regular part of our prayer time we ask to do just that-tolerate sin.

Ask God to take the magnifying glass to your heart and show you where sin may reside so that you may be washed clean. Then approach Him with confidence knowing that He forgives us our sins and delivers us from unrighteousness.

**Verses to Consider:**

Psalms 32: 1-5; Proverbs 28:13; I John 1:8, 9; Mark 11:25; Isaiah 59:2

**Quotes to Ponder:**

"Confession is the ground clearing before the building goes up." Mark Buchanan

"Confession is presenting our real self to God." Mark Buchanan

"Un-confessed sin cuts off our communication with the Father." Bill Hybels

**Questions to Ask:**

Is confession a regular part of your prayer time?

What are you asking God to do when you fail to acknowledge your need for forgiveness?

What does Scripture tell us He will do if we confess our sins to Him?

What difference does confession make in our prayer lives?

Spend some time today asking the Spirit to convict you of un-confessed sin. Bring those things before the Throne and ask for forgiveness. He is faithful to His promises and will forgive us our sins.



**Day Eight: Projector**  
*The Big Picture*  
**Waiting on God**

**Connections to Make:**

Do you hate to wait as much as I do? Probably. There is just something almost impossible about having to wait, whether it's waiting in a grocery line or waiting for a Christmas package to arrive. It is hard to wait. And waiting on God can be the hardest waiting of all.

But there is a purpose to waiting on God that makes the waiting seem a little bit sweeter. In the process of waiting we may discover that that which we most want isn't what we are waiting for after all. Instead what we are really waiting for is to become more like Him. God is so good to us that sometimes He allows us to wait because we are a work in progress and the waiting is a part of the process.

So next time you are tempted to "hurry up and help" God because you just can't wait. Stop and think about what He is doing in you- behind the scenes where you cannot see. Realize that just as there is much more to the movie being projected onto the big screen at the theater than we can see, so there is much more to God's plan in our waiting than we see projected in the daily circumstances of our lives.

**Verses to Consider:**

Psalms 62:1,5; Psalm 130:5-7; Lamentations 3:19-26;  
II Peter 3:8,9

**Quotes to Ponder:**

"The primary discipline of prayer is waiting... living out the conviction that the Lord is not slow in keeping His promises, as some understand slowness." Mark Buchanan  
"Prayer and waiting are intrinsically linked, joined at the hips. Prayer makes now sense apart from waiting. Prayer is about being made in the likeness of Christ." Mark Buchanan

**Questions to Ask:**

Is it hard for you to wait for God to answer prayer?

Have you ever found that once you have waited, what you wanted originally doesn't seem so important?

How do you think God uses the waiting on Him that we do to make us more like Him?

Does waiting mean that God is not answering?

Are you willing to wait?

**Day Nine: Otoscope**  
*For Your Listening Pleasure*  
**Learning to Listen**

**Connections to Make:**

I don't know of too many parents who haven't wondered at some point or another if they need to take their child in for a hearing test. How many times can you be ignored before you question their medical status? 20 on an average day, I guess.

I believe God gave us children to teach us more about our own relationship with Him. And I think that He would like to send us for a hearing test or two at times.

It can be so easy to talk to God when we get into the habit. Unfortunately, sometimes it can be entirely too easy. We find ourselves doing all of the talking and making God do all of the listening. Which is ironic when you think about it. Scripture tells me that He knows all of my thoughts and that I can't even begin to fathom His. And yet, I talk and rarely listen.

That must change. I do not learn from my own babbling to others. Rather I learn when I take the time to listen to others wisdom. And I do not learn from God when I never take time to be silent before Him, waiting with expectancy for what He will say with all wisdom.

Today may He take the otoscope to my ear and search out anything that keeps me from listening. "But the Lord is in His Holy Temple; let all the earth be silent before Him." Habakkuk 2:20

**Verses to Consider:**

Psalm 85:8; Ecclesiastes 5:1; Psalm 4:4

**Quotes to Ponder:**

"Silence is the room we create for the searching of God, where we hear His voice and follow." Mark Buchanan (Your God is Too Safe)

God's method doesn't change because we are so noisy and busy. He is longing for your attention, your individual and full attention... He will wait and wait until you finally sit in silence and listen." Charles Swindoll

"We are silent at the beginning of the day because God should have the first word, and we are silent before going to sleep because the last word also belongs to God."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"I do not need to feel upset if sometimes God chooses to remain silent. He's a Living Being, not an answering machine, and He speaks when He has something to say."

Bill Hybles

**Questions to Ask:**

When was the last time you just sat and listened to God?

When we don't take time to listen in silence, what message are we telling God and ourselves?

What do you do to ensure you have time to be silent before God?

Do you have a way of recording what He is telling you?

**Day Ten: Contact Lenses**  
*For Daily Wear*  
**Daily-ness of Prayer**

**Connections to Make:**

I've never been really good at diets. I think I've lasted a week on one before. It requires too much discipline and I don't see results fast enough (anything less than 20 pounds in a week is not fast enough). Of course, the good news is that diets aren't encouraged any more. Proper eating habits and regular exercise are instead. I'm not sure that I am really better off though- it requires discipline too. But I am working on it.

Something else that requires daily discipline, proper habits, and regular exercise is prayer. Just as I cannot hope to have a healthy body if I don't discipline it, I cannot have a healthy prayer life if I don't discipline it. My prayer life cannot merely consist of "snack" prayer-quick thoughts here and there. I must also make it a habit to sit down to full-course meal of prayer. Only then will I find the nutrition I need to grow consistently in my Christian life.

If contact lenses are not taken care of on a daily basis, they cannot provide the correct help for faulty eyesight. The same is true of prayer- it must be taken care of on a daily basis to provide the correct help for faulty spiritual eyesight.

**Verses to Consider:**

Ephesians 6:18; Luke 18:1; Luke 5:16; Acts 4:24-31;  
Colossians 4:2

**Quotes to Ponder:**

"When we pray with others, we realize our own weaknesses and needs and we find the encouragement and the grace that God has placed in the people who make up the body of Christ." - Brian Dodd

"As with my loved ones, so with prayer: there is no quality without quantity. No day of prayer can atone for weeks without prayer." – Ben Patterson

**Questions to Ask:**

Is the daily-ness of prayer easy for you or hard?

What are some things you have done to make your prayer life more enjoyable?

Have you kept a journal?

Do you have a prayer accountability partner?

Do you have a time and place set-aside for prayer?

## **Day Eleven: Periscope**

*More to the Picture than Meets the Eye*

### **Spiritual Warfare**

#### **Connections to Make:**

It started with Batman, then Superman, then Batman Beyond. That's what my boys wanted to be when they grew up. Superheroes. And that would be ok if it didn't require being an animated thing, sketched on someone's drawing board and brought to "life" by sophisticated computers and machines. No, I don't think they will get to be Batman or Superman or Batman Beyond (after all, Christopher Reeve may have played Superman but he never actually became Superman.) But they can be superheroes of a sort- they can be Prayer Warriors.

They can learn to fight the "good fight" on behalf of the Ultimate Good Guy. They can put on the armor of God and make a difference in the spiritual realms. And they can do it not by their own strength and might but by the Spirit of the Lord.

When we engage in prayer, we engage in warfare. Never forget it. We may not see with our eyes the demons and principalities that seek to do us harm, but they are there. Ephesians 6:12 assures us of that. And with that in mind, after instructing us in putting on the armor of God, Ephesians 6:18 calls us to prayer.

Just as a periscope allows a submarine crew to see what enemies may be around them, not seen by the naked eye, so a clear view of prayer can help us see the enemies around us. Prayer helps us fight the battle and win.

#### **Verses to Consider:**

Ephesians 6:12-18; Colossians 4:12

#### **Quotes to Ponder:**

"To pray is to engage in radical Spiritual Warfare" – Ben Patterson

"The Bible is clear there is nothing we can do to change His ultimate will for our lives and for the world. But how God may choose to go about achieving His goals for others and us is open to change. His means are flexible."

Ben Patterson

"A 'Prayer Warrior' is a person who is convinced that God is omnipotent – that God has the power to do anything, change anyone, and to intervene in any circumstance. A person who truly believes this refuses to doubt God." – Bill Hybels

"You can do more than pray, after you have prayed but you can never do more than pray until you have prayed."

– AJ Gordon

#### **Questions to Ask:**

Is prayer a powerful weapon in Spiritual Warfare?

Why is it so powerful?

If we see prayer as a weapon against the schemes of the devil, how will it change the way we pray?

Why is it important to "pray first"?

## **Day Twelve: Binoculars**

### ***Even a Back-row Seat Can be a Blessing***

### **Praying for Others**

#### **Connections to Make:**

I used to feel completely comfortable with group prayer. Like most everyone else, I listened to the requests, occasionally wrote them down and then added my own “amen” when the praying was done. But somewhere along the way, God started opening my ears to the petitions of the people. I wonder if what I began to hear was what He was hearing, and if it was, did it bother Him as much as it bothered me? What I heard was mainly a list of people’s desires to be comfortable. Heal my great-aunt so she is not in pain. Give me a job so I can feed my family. Heal my friend’s husband who is suffering from cancer. Give me safe travels as I go on a mission trip. The list can go on. And before I go on, please let me assure you that I believe God wants us to pray about everyone of these things (they are important) and I am not trying to belittle any prayer request. However, what I would like to point out is that very rarely were any of the requests tied to eternal things. I believe God wants people to be whole, but I believe that what He wants even more is for us to be spiritually whole. His very Word tells us that there will be hardships. We must expect it in this life. Consider Paul’s perspective on his trials and tribulations in Philippians 1:9-14 and what he was motivated to pray for in concern for others even as he suffered for the sake of the Gospel.

<sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, <sup>10</sup>so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, <sup>11</sup>filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God. <sup>12</sup>Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. <sup>13</sup>As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.

<sup>14</sup>Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.” Phil. 1:1-14

Once again, I’m not suggesting that we don’t pray for healing (James encourages us to) or that we don’t pray for a job to support our family (II Thessalonians 3:10). What I am suggesting, however, is that we must be clear on our priorities in praying for others. Our prayers should not simply dwell on the temporary and physical. They must more and more go into the eternal and spiritual. Simply put, we need to pray that people become more Christ-like than that people become more comfortable.

#### **Verses to Consider:**

Romans 15:30; 2 Corinthians 1:11; I Timothy 2:1-4; James 5:13-16; Luke 22:32; Romans 12:12

#### **Quotes to Ponder:**

“In fact, if we genuinely love people, we desire for them far more than it is within our power to give and that will cause us to pray.” – Richard Foster

“Intercession means that we rouse ourselves up to get the mind of Christ about the one for whom we pray.” – Oswald Chambers

#### **Questions to Ask:**

Look at several of Paul’s prayers in the New Testament. What things does he pray about for others?  
Romans 15:5-6; I Corinthians 1:4-9; 2 Corinthians 13:7-9; Ephesians 1:15-23; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 1:3-6; Philippians 9:1-11; Colossians 1:3-14; Colossians 4:2-4; I Thessalonians 1:2-3; I Thessalonians 3:9-13; II Thessalonians 1:11-12; II Thessalonians 2:16-17

What did Jesus pray for concerning others? John 17

**Day Thirteen: Spectroscope**  
*I Can See the Light*  
**Providing an Example for Others**

**Connections to Make:**

God has given a great gift in encouraging us to pray with one another. It is an opportunity to agree with one another in presenting our requests and it is an opportunity to encourage one another by the expression of faith we make when we pray. In Acts the Disciples constantly joined together with others in prayer. In doing so, they were able to agree with one another in presenting their requests- an extra “amen” if you will. And Paul and Silas’ public prayer became an opportunity to share their faith with others. The result of their intense time of prayer and worship was the salvation of many. Others saw evidence of their faith through their prayers.

We also have the same opportunities when we engage in public prayer. But first we must be mindful of who we are praying to and why. If we are not careful our focus can change from talking to God to giving information out to those around us. Jesus was mindful of who He was praying to when He prayed in public. He didn’t just string a bunch of words together so He sounded “spiritual”. And He didn’t pray to impart statistics and opinions to those around Him, gossiping more than praying. He had a conversation with God that others were invited to agree with. We can pray that way too.

We must also be mindful in public prayer as the leader that we are representing not only ourselves before God but also those gathered around us. Consider the Lord’s Prayer. Jesus gave us wonderful model of prayer that applies to all of us. We all can know God as our Heavenly Father, we all need daily bread, we all need forgiveness of sin, we all need to be delivered from the evil one, and we all need to reverence His name and seek His glory.

**Verses to Consider:**

Acts 1:14; Acts 16:25; Matthew 6:7,8; John 11:41,42;

**Quotes to Ponder:**

“When we pray with others we realize our own weaknesses and needs and we find the encouragement and the grace that God has placed in the people who make up the body of Christ.” Brian Dodd

“Commonly, those who pray long in a meeting do so, not because they have a spirit of prayer, but because they have not. They should keep to the point and pray for what they came to pray for and not follow the imagination of their own hearts all over the universe.” Charles Finney

**Questions to Ask:**

Do you feel comfortable praying out loud in public?

If not have you considered writing your prayer down and reading it during prayer time? A written prayer can be as sincere and Spirit-led as a spontaneous prayer. And writing it down can be a starting point until you become more comfortable in spontaneous group prayer.

If you pray aloud in public, do you pray to give information to those around you or to bring your requests before God?

Do the words you chose and the details you give reflect that desire?

How can you encourage others to become more comfortable with public prayer?

## **Day Fourteen: Sunglasses**

### *The Future's So Bright...*

### **Making Praise a Priority**

#### **Connections to Make:**

I love it when every once in awhile, out of the blue, one of my boys look at me with eyes full of love and says, "I love you." There's nothing like that feeling of knowing your child loves you just because they do. I think God feels the same way. His heart must swell when we turn our eyes toward Him and tell Him how much we love Him. One of the ways we can tell God how much we love Him is through praise. When we praise God we acknowledge who He is. Everyone wants to be loved for who they are not just what they do.

Our God is not a celestial vending machine. But we may be tempted to establish Him as such in our prayer time if all we ever do is ask, ask, and ask some more. "God give me this. God do that." Getting from God is not the true purpose of prayer. And while thanksgiving is very important in prayer, Scripture admonishes us to be thankful, it cannot take the place of praise.

Praise helps us keep a proper perspective of just how awesome our God is. Praise helps us know more about God. And it helps us know that God is big enough and powerful enough to answer our prayers. It focuses our attention on Him rather than our problems and our concerns.

The majority of our prayers seem to focus on petition but what would happen if we focused on praise? I think the presence of God would be so evident that we couldn't help but see lives changed. Maybe we would even need sunglasses during prayer time.

#### **Verses to Consider:**

Ecclesiastes 5:1-3, 7; Luke 10:21; Hebrews 13:15;  
Psalm 9:1

#### **Quotes to Ponder:**

"Jesus teaches us to seek the face of God first when we pray, not the hand of God." – Brian Dodd

"No, God doesn't need our praise – we need to give it. For to praise God is to sharpen our soul's vision of His greatness and goodness, and thus to increase our soul's greatness and goodness." Ben Patterson

"In thanksgiving we list God's benefits, in praise He is the benefit." – Ben Patterson

"Praising the Lord is the one thing we do (outwardly) on earth that we will do forever in eternity." – Michael Yousseff (Empowered by Praise)

"Praise puts all prayer requests into the right perspective. It keeps the focus on God as the One I am trusting with every detail, every challenge, every relationship of my life." – Michael Yousseff

#### **Questions to Ask:**

What is the difference between praise and thanksgiving?

What difference does praise make in our prayer time?

Consider how you can use some of the Names of God to praise Him.

1. Elohim- The Most High God
2. El Shaddai- God Almighty
3. Yahweh- The God Who Always Is
4. Jehovah-Jireh- God Our Provider
5. Jehovah-Rapha- God Our Healer
6. Jehovah-Nissi- God Our Banner
7. Jehovah-Mekaddish- God Who Makes Us Holy
8. Jehovah-Shalom- God Our Peace
9. Jehovah-Rohi- God Our Shepherd
10. Jehovah-Tsidkenu- God Our Righteousness
11. Jehovah-Shammah- God Who Is Always Present

**Day Fifteen: Camera**  
*Those Kodak Moments*  
**Trusting in Answered Prayer**

**Connections to Make:**

Have you ever noticed how many infomercials there are out there? Infomercials for diet plans, exercise machines, cookware, brighter teeth. In addition to a great price, they offer testimonials from “real” people who swear by the product. It’s so tempting to believe every one of them. We all want to experience the same life changing power just like they did. So, we order away and get discouraged when we don’t get the same results.

Prayer can seem the same way to us at times. We listen to other’s testimonials and want the same results. Unfortunately we don’t always get them. God doesn’t answer prayers according to a cookie-cutter mold. He has the absolute best in mind for each of us, and that may not lead to the same answer in prayer as our brother in Christ received. But, unlike the testimonies and products from the infomercials, we can be guaranteed that God does change our lives.

Every Christian has had at least one prayer answered- you are saved. We can trust in that. We can trust in His love. We can trust in His mercies, which are new every morning. We can trust in His faithfulness. We can trust in His goodness. When we are tempted to become discouraged because our prayers aren’t being answered the way we think they should be or when we think they should be, we can trust in who He is and the testimony He gives us in His Word. After all, He has the power to do exceedingly, abundantly more than we can ever begin to imagine.

**Verses to Consider:**

Hebrews 4:15,16; I John 5:14,15; Psalm 103;  
Psalm 46:1-3

**Quotes to Ponder:**

“The Psalms teach us to focus our thoughts on those qualities of God which reassure us of His love and involvement. They teach us to look way from circumstances to the Lord. They remind us that a focus on the God who can change our circumstances will also transform our emotions.” Larry Richards

“At the end of each month I read over my prayer journal and see where God has done miraculous things...If I can list a number of answers to specific prayers in January, I feel better prepared to trust in God in February.” – Bill Hybels

**Questions to Ask:**

What is the benefit of seeing prayer answered?

Even when the results are not what we wanted, is it still important for us to see answered prayer?

How does answered prayer motivate us to pray?

What are some recent answers to prayer that you have had?



## **We Need the “R” in PRAY**

It’s probably a good thing I’ve never dreamed of being a secretary. If you have ever seen me type, you would know why. Surely, I would be the lowest paid one – just based on my typing skills alone. However, occasionally being bad at something is a good thing. What I mean is that I discovered a truth just by leaving off a letter as I was typing out some thoughts.

Did you know that the word “praying” is “paying” when you leave out the “r”? An elementary spelling lesson points to an enlightening question in prayer. If we leave out the “r” (relationship) in our prayers, what are we left with but an attitude of paying God for answers in our prayers?

It is interesting to note the fundamental difference in the motivation of prayer between the Israelites and other ancient cultures. As I was reading the book, “Every Prayer and Petition in the Bible” by Larry Richards, I was inspired by his thoughts on prayer and our view of God. The way we view God determines the way we pray.

In the Roman culture, prayer was a type of legal transaction. Their prayer life was full of sacrifices and rituals designed to do a little “back scratching”. In other words, if I performed correctly, I could expect the gods to honor my request. This seems silly to us, yet how often do we reduce our prayer life to just that? A legal requirement to seal a transaction. I have to spend so many minutes at such a time of day praying before God will keep up His end of the deal.

Of course, the Romans were not alone in their manipulation of the gods. Mr. Richards points out that the Sumerian prayer life was about bargaining with the gods. Humans were tasked with doing the jobs the lesser gods did not want to do. He writes that, “while the gods had powers beyond those of humans, the gods were still dependent on human beings for sacrifices and offerings. And this gave humans a certain leverage for bargaining with the gods.” So the tone and expectations of their prayers were, “you need us to do these things for you, so you need to keep us willing by answering our requests.” Again, how ridiculous for us to even think about doing this with God. After all we know He doesn’t need us to do anything for Him. He is self-sufficient without us. But, don’t we sometimes

come with just that attitude of “God, you need me so keep me happy?” when we pray treating God as though He needs us to pray to Him before He can work?

The last pagan culture Mr. Richards draws our attention to is the Egyptian culture. Here the power of prayer was in the ability to cast the right spells and incantations. Since their gods had little regard for humans, it was necessary to manipulate them. There was a belief that man could gain power over the gods through magic to make them care. This is a sad but potential problem in our prayer lives too. We read all the books on prayer and then put all that learning into practice like an apprentice with a book of spells – guaranteed to make God care about our prayer. (Let me note here that the problem is not with the book, but with our expectations for the book and it’s advice to make our prayer life come alive.) We pray as though there is correct sequence and a handful of “magic” words that will unlock a hidden power.

So, what was the Israelites view of prayer? If we define prayer as communication then the first difference would have to be in who first initiated the conversation – God. And the intent of this communication was relationship not manipulation. Prayer was not a contract between man and a god who was the other impersonal half of a legal agreement. It was not a bargain with a god dependent on its subjects being kept happy. And it certainly wasn’t an exercise in magic over a god in order to gain power. Rather it was a relationship – between a loving Father who has the ability and desire to give and His child.

When we leave out the “r” – relationship – in prayer we reduce our prayer to a payment. We are “paying” God through our rituals and words. Since we know that we communicate with a God who is not dependent on us and cannot be manipulated, we need to pray that way. Enough of the formulas of prayer when they subtly teach us that God can be controlled through our prayer life. Enough of a certain way at a certain time of day with certain words. Instead let us recognize these things for the tools they are, not the means of manipulating our Father. When we sit down, bow down, or stand up in prayer we need to make sure that our “typing” skills are worthy. We must not leave off the “r” thereby creating not a time of praying but rather a time of paying. After all, who is God that He can be manipulated in even the most spiritual of things?!

"And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they

love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.” Matthew 6:5-8. CLW

## A Suggested Pattern of Prayer

In prayer, simplicity is best. Here is a pattern of prayer presented by Laurence Hull Stookey in Let the Whole Church Say Amen: a Guide for Those Who Pray in Public that you may want to consider using to make your prayer time more focused... the idea is to break your prayer into five segments:

1. **Petition** – simply, what are you asking for?
2. **Purpose** – why are you asking this?
3. **Attribution**- what in the nature of God allows you or encourages you to ask this request?
4. **Address** – whom are you addressing?
5. **Closing** – by what authority do you pray? (In Jesus' name)

Let's look at a Bible prayer and see how it fits this pattern. I Thessalonians 5:23,24 "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it."

1. Petition – Sanctify you through and through
2. Purpose – May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ
3. Attribution - The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it
4. Address - the God of peace
5. Closing – in Jesus' name Amen

Put into this order it would sound something like this:

"O God of Peace,  
You have called us and you are faithful.  
Sanctify us entirely  
That our spirits, souls and bodies may be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
In Jesus' name we pray, Amen."

## An Example of Praying Scripture

### Adoration

I will exalt You, my God and King; I will bless Your name for ever and ever. Every day I will bless You, And I will praise Your name for ever and ever. Great are You, Lord, and most worthy of praise; Your greatness is unsearchable (Psalm 145:1-3)

### Confession

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. O Lord, do not forsake me; O my God, be not far from me! Make haste to help me, O Lord my salvation. (Psalm 38:18, 21-22)

### Renewal

May I be strong and courageous and careful to obey Your word; may I not turn from it to the right or to the left, that I may act wisely wherever I go. (Joshua 1:7)

### Petition

Hear my prayer, O Lord, Give ear to my supplications! Answer me in Your faithfulness and righteousness. (Psalm 143:1)

### Intercession

May we offer petitions, prayers, intercessions and thanksgivings on behalf of all people, for kings and all those who are in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and reverence. This is good and acceptable in Your sight, God our Savior, for You desire all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (I Timothy 2:1-4)

### Affirmation

It is because of You, Father, that I am in Christ Jesus, who has become for me wisdom from You – that is, my righteousness, sanctification and redemption. (I Corinthians 1:30)

### Thanksgiving

It is in You, Lord Jesus, that I have peace. In this world I will have tribulation, but I will be of good cheer, because You have overcome the world. (John 16:33)

### Closing Prayer

God, You are my strong fortress And You make my way perfect. You make my feet like the feet of a deer; You enable me to stand on the heights. You train my hands for battle So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. You give me Your shield of salvation; You stoop down to make me great. You broaden the path beneath me, And my feet have not slipped. (2 Samuel 22:33-37; Psalm 18:33-36)

Adapted from "Face to Face: Praying the Scriptures for Intimate Worship" by Kenneth Boa

## Scriptures on Prayer...

But if from there you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in distress and all these things have happened to you, then in later days you will return to the LORD your God and obey him. For the LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon or destroy you or forget the covenant with your forefathers, which he confirmed to them by oath. Deut. 4:29-31

The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their cry; The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. Ps. 34:15,17

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Ps.37:4

You are forgiving and good, O Lord, abounding in love to all who call to you. Hear my prayer, O LORD; listen to my cry for mercy. In the day of my trouble I will call to you, for you will answer me. Ps. 86:5-7

The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. Ps. 145:18,19

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. Isa. 65:24

Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. Jer. 29:12,13

'Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.' Jer. 33:3

The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; Lam. 3:25

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him! Matt. 7:7-11

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." Matt. 18:19,20

If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Matt. 21:22

Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. Mk. 11:24,25

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. Jn. 15:7

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. Ro. 8:26

For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Eph. 2:18

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, Eph. 3:20

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Heb. 4:16

## Scripture Prayers to Pray for Others

For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:9-14

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge--that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:14-21

With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Thessalonians 1:11,12

So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word. 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. 2 Peter 1:2-9

## **Psalms to Pray**

### **Psalm 8**

O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet: all flocks and herds, and the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas. O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

### **Psalm 23**

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

### **Psalm 28:7,8**

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and I am helped. My heart leaps for joy and I will give thanks to him in song. The LORD is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one.

### **Psalm 55:22**

Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous fall.

### **Psalm 100**

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his ; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

### **Psalm 37**

Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away. Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun. Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret--it leads only to evil. For evil men will be cut off, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

### **Psalm 63**

O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. My soul will be satisfied as with the richest of foods; with singing lips my mouth will praise you. On my bed I remember you; I think of you through the watches of the night. Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings. My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me. They who seek my life will be destroyed; they will go down to the depths of the earth. They will be given over to the sword and become food for jackals. But the king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God's name will praise him, while the mouths of liars will be silenced.

### **Psalm 84:1-10**

How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD Almighty! My soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the LORD; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may have her young-- a place near your altar, O LORD Almighty, my King and my God. Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you. Selah Blessed are those whose strength is in you, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools. They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion. Hear my prayer, O LORD God Almighty; listen to me, O God of Jacob. Selah Look upon our shield, O God; look with favor on your anointed one. Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

## PRAYER/DEVOTIONAL RESOURCE LIST

You may find the following books useful in developing a richer prayer life. The list is in no way exhaustive.

Praying the Scriptures for Your Children by Jodie Berndt  
The Power of a Praying Wife by Stormie Omartian  
Praying the Scriptures by Judson Cornwall  
In His Presence by E.W. Kenyon  
Beyond the Veil by Alice Smith  
Hearing From God by Mary Ruth Swope  
Intercessory Prayer by Dutch Sheets  
The Rules of Engagement by Charles Kraft  
Prophetic Intercession by Barbara Wentroble  
The Power of Covenant Prayer by Francis Frangipane  
Intercession: Thrilling and Fulfilling by Joy Dawson  
Kneeling on the Promises by Jim Goll  
Lord Teach Me To Pray by Kay Arthur  
A Hunger for God by John Piper  
E. M. Bounds on Prayer published by Whitaker House  
Face to Face: Praying the Scriptures for Intimate Worship  
by Ken Boa  
A Time to Pray God's Way by Evelyn Christenson  
Partners in Prayer by John Maxwell  
Desperate for God by Nancie Carmichael  
52 Fun Family Prayer Adventures by Mike and Amy Nappa  
Praying Jesus' Way by Brain Dodd  
Deepening Your Conversation with God by Ben Patterson  
Let the Whole Church Say Amen by Laurence Hull Stookey  
I Am by Steve Fry  
A Call to Spiritual Reformation: Priorities from Paul and His Prayers by D.A. Carson  
A Passion for Prayer by Tom Elliff  
Empowered By Praise by Michael Yousseff

*Pray for each other concerning:*

Personal Concern-

Family Concern-

Spiritual Concern-

Ministry Concern-

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